



August 2, 2013

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Joint Ex-Parte Comment for CC Docket No. 12-375 ("Wright Petition")

Dear Secretary Dortch:

We are contacting you in reference to CC Docket No. 12-375 (known as the "Wright Petition"). Yesterday, members and allies of the Campaign for Prison Phone Justice met with Commissioner Rosenworcel and her staff to discuss the pending order, scheduled for a vote at the Commission's meeting on Friday August 9th, regarding "Reforming Rates for Interstate Inmate Calling Services."

In our meeting we were joined by Steven Renderos of the Center for Media Justice, NY; Dr. Artika Tyner of the St. Thomas University and College of Law, MN; Talila Lewis of Helping Educate the Advance the Rights of the Deaf (HEARD) Washington DC; Heather Rice-Minus of Prison/Justice Fellowship, Washington DC; and Bethany Frasier, an impacted family member.

Over the course of our call, participants shared the following:

- Bethany Frasier: Forced to downsize housing four times in two years—to free up money for her children to receive calls from their father. In the early stages of incarceration, her family would've paid any amount to stay in touch. Phone calls are extremely important for her children to know and maintain their relationship to their father.
- Talila Lewis: Unique impact of prison phone rates to prisoners with disabilities, specifically the added cost of connecting a relay operator. Also reinforced the need for prisons to provide more modern technology for disabled communications.
- Heather Rice-Minus: Telephone calls from prison are vital in keeping families together and communities safer. Justice Fellowship and other partners on the right believe phone rate reform will lead to a reduction in recidivism and costs related to incarceration.
- Dr. Artika Tyner: There are 15,000 children in Minnesota with an incarcerated parent. Studies show children's psychological experience with a prisoner parent is likened to a death in the family. Child's positive development tied directly to their frequency in communication with their parents.

This testimony further highlights the need strong and comprehensive reform by the FCC. Additionally it illustrates the additional obstacles that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community experience—and suggests a need for *additional and uniquely tailored remedies* for this community.

Following our testimony we engaged in a brief discussion with Commissioner Rosenworcel, regarding our concerns. We were pleased to hear the Commissioner shares many of our concerns—and is keenly aware of the impact that communication (or lack thereof) has on families and children.

Finally, and on behalf of the communities we represent, we urge the FCC to take action to address the cost of intrastate phone rates--which falls squarely within the FCC's jurisdiction--and bring parity to pricing for *all* calls from inmates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amalia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

amalia deloney
Policy Director, Center for Media Justice